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We desire to purchase the following numbers of THE DECORATOR AND FURNISHER to complete our files. Kindly let us hear from you. We will buy single copies, or all that are missing.

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IN assuming the pleasurable duties of our position it is the wish of the editor to keep in touch with the readers of THE DECORATOR AND FURNISHER, and to extend to them a helping hand, as far as possible, in artistic and practical decorative matters pertaining to the home, where his long experience may be of benefit to them; to that end we beg to call attention to our department of "Amateur House Decoration," the success of which has grown far beyond the most sanguine expectations of the publishers. The letters we are constantly receiving express the warmest approval of our efforts and satisfaction as to results in this line. This information is open to all subscribers of our magazine, and in every instance prompt and thoughtful consideration will be given the problem in hand.

HAVE you a corner of your parlor, living room, hall or chamber in which you would like to arrange a cosey corner, did you but know how to go about it in an artistic and economical manner? If so, send us a rough draft of outline and proportions, giving also a clear idea of existing conditions and requirements—the most important of which should be the colors of walls, woodwork and ceiling, and we will send you a special design, with samples of colors and materials, with cost of same.

In connection with this subject we wish also to call attention to our "Purchasing Department," through which we supply to our subscribers wall papers, draperies, carpets, and, in fact, all lines of household furniture and fittings, at reasonable prices and from the most reliable sources, for which service we make no charges whatsoever.

OUR new department, "Remodeling the Commonplace Home," under the direction of the well-known architect, Edward Lee Young, has already proved its practicability and usefulness. A broad and easy avenue of ascent from one floor to another is such a self-evident blessing and in itself so suggestive of comfort and ease, that the wonder is the fact does not more readily impress itself upon the most superficial mind in the planning and building of a house; we have been so in the habit of taking things for granted and running in grooves in these matters, that the fact of a possibility of necessary fixtures being made comfortable and to our taste seems like a revelation to many of us. For example, in the February issue this practical writer treats in a thoroughly artistic manner on the remodeling of the unsightly straight run of staircase so frequently met with in the average city house, so much affected by the builders of ten or more years ago; this able article brings to mind the fact that the same conditions are frequently found in many of the moderate-priced country houses of the present day.

To the dwellers in city houses of the comparatively inexpensive class, many acknowledged necessities, entailed by want of space and other limitations, naturally bring about ungainly results; but why these should be transplanted bodily into the same class of country houses is more than a thoughtful mind can contemplate with any degree of patience. The long, narrow and precipitous staircase, so commonly met with both in city and country, invariably ends in a sharp series of "winders" at the top, a dangerous makeshift, threatening passengers—more especially elderly people and children—with sprained ankles and broken limbs, if nothing more serious, and to one who, having made a misstep at the start, finds himself at the bottom, *brevi muri*. This mode of descent, although expeditious beyond any manner of doubt, is most noticeable as having many disadvantages.

THE question arises, How may this be remedied in a simple and inexpensive manner? The chief difficulty is the narrowness of the step where a good foothold is most needed; next to the hand-rail, where the stairway turns at the "winder," and the expedient suggests itself of turning in the rail at this point in such a manner as to direct the passage toward the wider portion of the stairs; this would necessitate narrowing up the traveling space at the curve, and to a certain extent spoil the symmetry, if such is possible; but when feeble footsteps travel the stairs many times a day, symmetry and customary forms should be sacrificed to comfort, and, above all, safety. On the other hand, if these changes be made with taste and judgment, oddity need not portend ugliness, although for awhile it might seem strange; and, furthermore, a pleasing feature may be made of the space thus cut off by adding a zinc-lined box of hard or painted wood to match the finish, fitting and following the shape of the stairs around the curve, and filling with potted plants and flowers. A handrail may be added on the wall side, from the bottom, following the curve of the stairs to the top, at a convenient height for use. These are but suggestions offered to those who, having such difficulties to contend with, do not feel prepared to meet the necessary trouble and expense in tearing out and rebuilding, even should the existing conditions make it permissible.

IN decorating the home, the best of materials are the cheapest in the end, and we would advise all who contemplate furnishing or refitting to do so, if necessary, a little at a time, but let that little be well done, and with the best of materials. Once well done, and with simple good taste, and it is done for all time, in spite of the manifold changes of Dame Fashion, as it is only the extremes in style that change, and good taste and good materials will always hold their own. Speaking of extremes reminds us that æstheticism and its disciples, a few years ago so noticeably before the public, and seemingly through the precepts and practices of false prophets, was so thoroughly misunderstood that a word or two here in connection with the subject would not be out of place.

The love of the beautiful finds a place in every refined mind, is a germ that desires cultivation, and is ever on the lookout for the means of gratifying that desire. Strip æs-

theticism of its habiliments of charlatanism, its "vague platitudes," its lackadaisical airs and graces—of all, in fact, that is unmanly—return to its original and true principles, and we find it simply a healthy yearning for higher knowledge and culture; a seeking to surround the home and every-day life with objects of true beauty, to fill the mind with higher thoughts, with soft, refining influences, that may help to lift us out of the narrow sphere into which the prosaic duties of every-day life induce us. This æstheticism, robbed of its outward show and supercilious gloss, may be brought to bear upon our homes and lives without reproach or fear of adverse criticism.

IN building a home, build for yourself and your family, not for the neighbors. Do not strive to have anything too odd, and above all things cultivate a love of home in the children and young folks in the family. Comfortable surroundings, with good books and music, are great factors in gathering the family together after the studies and toils of the day.

A house may be luxurious, elegant and beautiful, and yet cold, dismal and unattractive to its inmates—such a house is not a home.

On the other hand, it may be simple and plain but bright with home interests: with music and the reading of books about the hearth, you will make this little home more attractive than the other.

With this end in view there is nothing so attractive as the old-fashioned open fireplace in the sitting or living room, an institution unfortunately fast dying out, as modern life seems to have no room for this pleasant institution.

Seldom nowadays do we see a home where father, mother and children are all gathered together, and beneath the big lamp spend a happy evening with books, music and chatter.

There is no excuse for this, as a home of the really "homey" sort will always be a pleasant and attractive place, and the young folks drawn to it by many ties.

It is the sweet and intimate companionship in the home circle, the pleasant intercourse around the home fireside, that makes a home really "home, sweet home."

WE GIVE on pages 171-172 of this edition illustrations of two rooms in the residence of the late Lord Leighton, in London, in which will be found reflected his great artistic taste. Lord Leighton died on January 25, 1896, after having been for the past forty years the leading figure of the art world in the British Empire. He was born at Scarborough in 1830, and studied under Francesca Meli, at Rome, also at the Royal Academy in Berlin, Frankfort-on-the-Main, and Florence. He was chosen president of the Royal Academy in 1878, and was knighted the same year. Many of Lord Leighton's works have been exhibited in this country, notably "Hercules Wrestling with Death," at the World's Fair, and the portrait of Dorothy Dean, his beautiful model at the Woman's Portrait Show, in New York.

THREE is a great rage at the present time for Turkish and East India smoking-rooms, and hardly a hotel, club or building devoted to luxurious life but has one room at least decorated in this quaint and fascinating manner. What possibly could suggest more luxury to the man of the world than an elegantly draped and appointed room or corner where he may lounge at ease in the dim light of hanging lanterns in wrought copper or iron, and the sumptuous surroundings and atmosphere of Eastern elegance, fully suggestive of idleness and luxury, where he may smoke his cigar and dream the leisure hours away?

WE would call our readers' attention to the fact that in addition to the regular edition of THE DECORATOR AND FURNISHER for April, 1896, which is 6000, we will publish an extra Detroit Easter Number of 20,000. In addition to the regular amount of reading matter, will be found many pages illustrating and describing some of Detroit's beautiful homes, and it will be an elegant and interesting souvenir.